

✠ A declaration of the Queenes Maiesties will

and commaundement, to haue certaine Lawes and orders put in execution against the exceſſe of Apparell, notified by her commaundement in the Starre-chamber the xiiij. of Februarie in the xxx. yeere of her reigne.

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P Our Queenes Maieſtie hath conſidered into what extremities a great number of her Subjects are fallen by the inordinate exceſſe in apparell, contrary both to the good lawes of the Realme, and to her Maieſties former admonitions by her Proclamations, and to the conſuſion of degrees of all eſtates, amongſt whome diuerſitie of apparell hath bene alwayes a ſpeciall and laudable marke, and finally to the impoueriſhing of the Realme, by dayly bringing into the ſame of ſuperfluitie of foine and vnnecellarie commodities, not able to be answered with the naturall marchandise of the Realme, as in all former times wel governed hath bene bled, and in all other kingdoms and countries is politiquely obſerued. For theſe and many other weightie conſiderations, her Maieſtie vpon ſpeciall care of the weale and good gouernment of her kingdom, hath with the aduiſe of her Counſel, thought it meete and moſt neceſſary at this time, to notiſie in the latter ende of this Terme of Hillary in her high Court of the Starre chamber, at an aſſemblye of diuers Lords and others of her priuie Counſell, and all the Juſtices of her Courtes at Weſtmiſter, and in the open hearing of a great number of the Juſtices of the Peace of all the parts of her Realme, and of a multitude of other of her Subjects, that her earneſt meaning is, without delay to haue a ſpeedie reſormation of this great intollerable abuſe, growen to an vnnecellurable diſorder, and the ſame to bee done by due execution of certaine parts of her Lawes remayning in force, in ſuch ſort as may beſt bee agreeable to the preſent time: And to that ende, for the beſt example of all others that can bee, hath alreadie for her owne moſt honourable Houſholde charged and authorized the Lord Steuard of her Houſholde, now preſent at this aſſemblye, for all perſons vnder his charge, and to the Lord Chamberlayne or vicechamberlayne for all perſons vnder their rule, to obſerue ſuch parts of her ſaide Lawes, and ſome neceſſary orders againſt exceſſe of apparell, as are hereafter particularly expreſſed to be duely obſerued: which to doe effectually the ſaid Lord Steuard for the houſholde, and the vicechamberlayne in the abſence of the Lord Chamberlayne haue undertaken to ſee executed. And at the ſame time alſo, her Maieſties pleaſure was declared in her ſaid Starrechamber, by the Lord Chancellor of England (as ſo commaunded by her Maieſtie) that all the Juſtices of Aſſiſes of the Realme, who were then there preſent, ſhoulde in their next Circuite through her whole Realme giue knowledge thereof in their open ſeſſions, & to charge all Juſtices of peace, that in their quarter ſeſſions, and in any other their aſſemblyes, and alſo all Maiors, and Officers of Townes Corporate, & all Officers of Liberties in their Courts, ſhoulde ſee to the ſpeedy execution thereof, after convenient time to be limited for a reaſonable warning, by the ſaid Juſtices of Aſſiſe, for the due execution and puniſhment of the offenders, ſo as no ſubiect of the Realme ſhal haue cauſe by ignorance to continue in their offence. The like commaundement alſo was there in that aſſemblye giuen by the ſaid Lord Chancellor to all the Heads, Auncients & Principals of houſes of Court and Chancerie, where the aforeſaide exceſſe was noted to be more largely of late yeeres ſpread amongſt the youth there, then in any other place of England, to ſee alſo to the ſpeedie reſormation thereof. The like commaundement alſo was there remembred to haue bene of late giuen by her Maieſties owne mouth to the Maior of London, and the Aldermen of the ſame, being beſore her Maieſtie in her preſence chamber at her Court. So as it may wel appeare how earneſtly her Maieſtie is reſolued to haue this notable diſorder and exceſſe ſpeedily & earneſtly reſormed for the benefit of her Realme. At the ſame aſſembly alſo was concluded in the two vniuerſities of Cambridge and Oxford, where this infection was ſeene to haue made entrie amongſt the youth, there ſhoulde be by the direction of the Lords the Chancelours of the ſame, a ſtreight order for reſpreſſing of the ſaid diſordered exceſſe of Apparell. And though her Maieſtie might by iuſtice of her lawes, make great proſſite by the execution of the ſame lawes remaining in force againſt the ſaid exceſſe, by leuying the great penalties due to her by execution of the ſame, and that alſo ſome part of the ſame lawes, being made diuers yeeres paſt, by the alteration of time, may ſeeme in ſome part hard to be exactly and duely obſerued in all parts: Therefore her Maieſties meaning was there declared at this time to be to make ſome prooſe of the execution onely of ſome parts of the ſame lawes, agreeable for the time hereafter expreſſed, without charging her ſubiects with the great forfeitures alreadie due to her Maieſtie, except it ſhall be againſt ſuch perſons as ſhe ſhall be prouoked by finding them diſobedient and vnwilling to obey and obſerue the ſpeciall claules and articles hereafter following.